

John Randolph to Andrew Jackson, August 22, 1830, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JOHN RANDOLPH TO JACKSON.

St. Petersburg, August 22, 1830.

particularly private and confidential

My dear Sir, For reasons which I am now reducing to writing, but cannot detain the Concord to finish, I desire to return home in time to take my seat in the next Congress (provided that my old constituents see fit to elect me) where I may fight under your banner;¹ and I acknowledge no

¹ In the margin appears this note by Randolph: “meanwhile, should Mr R. or Mr McL. wish to return also; I would be glad to be at P. or London in my present Station. I would give 20,000 now to be at either. I am in the Bastille, cut off by Despotism from the surrounding world.” Rives was minister to Paris and McLane to London.

other leader; against Mammoth, Leviathan, Legion, or—“whatever title please his ear, your adversary and mine—“the adversary of God and Man”, whose friends are the foes of us and of the people, whose foes, wheresoever found, are our friends and their friends. There I may sustain you. Here I can do you no good (altho I might have done you some but for this strange dilatoriness)

Let me beg you to refer to our correspondence once more. Decr. 30, Mr Secty V. B. writes: “The letters to Mr M. were sent off immediately after my return” [from Richmond] “and the moment we hear from him, the other matter” [my appointmnt.] “will be announced. I shall be anxious to see you off as early in the spring as may be found practicable,

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having reference to all circumstances.” Mr. M. it seems, has played back upon the S. of S. his own game. Be that as it may, we have lost *time* and *tide which wait for no man*. Cincinnatus, the Warriour-Ploughman, knows and none so well, that if seed time be neglected there can be no Harvest.

Sir, there is something wrong. My mind misgives me. My best regards to Mr Branch whom I greatly respect. He is an honest man and your friend—personally attached to you, with no ulterior views. We get it on both sides of the House it seems. Mr Chairman of the Ways and Means the Patroclus of Mr Achilles C. was no doubt too much occupied with his much-bepraised Defence of Leviathan,² to think of an appropriation bill for outfits. Thus, nurse engrossed with dandling and kissing her own sweet Baby, forgets the nursling in the cradle, sits upon it and overlays the poor thing.

² George McDuffie was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. He was greatly under the influence of Calhoun. By “Leviathan” the Second Bank of the United States was meant.

Sir such a circumstance would have cast ridicule and reproach upon the Admns. of Jefferson or Madison, and has done more to lessen yours to say nothing of injury to the Publick Service than any *act* could do. It never could have happened when J. R. was in that chair. No former Secty or Chairman of W. and M. would have made such a blunder. But was it an oversight? Willis Alston would have done better.

Perhaps you'll say What is R. at now? Is he Batting with the Chillons [Alstons?] and Stansberrys and *John Holmes* !³ no this last name settles the question, if the Bank did not do it. No true coalitionist is anti-Bank. “Is he then for t'other candidate?” (the V. P.) That question too is answered: and if it were not, all our strong doses, Tariff, Bank and all, are from that quarter. I thought once the penitent had confessed and been reconciled to the Catholick Church of State-Rights, with Hayne and

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3 John Holmes, of Maine, M. C. 1817–1820, U. S. senator 1820–1827, 1829–1833, had many clashes with John Randolph. William Stansberry, of Ohio, was a member of Congress 1827–1833. Thomas Chilton, of Kentucky, was a member of Congress 1827–1829, and 1833–1835. The reading “Chillons” is uncertain. No man by that name had sat in Congress in 1830. The nearest approach is Thomas Chilton, a very inconspicuous member from Kentucky who had sat for one term. It is hardly likely that Randolph would have placed him alongside of Stansberry and John Holmes as objects of his contempt. The handwriting hardly warrants “Alstons”, but that name fits better than any other that occurs to the editor.

my gallant friend Hamilton.⁴ But on Webster's touching the sore place, He winced. All that he had recanted in private to Father Macon and brother Roanoke went for nothing, and he has made a reservation, which (as Mr. Secty V. B. would say) will enable him to act hereafter “according to all circumstances”, or events to come.

4 James Hamilton, jr., of South Carolina. See vol. III., p. 344n.

“Is R. then mad? as they say. Is he an Ishmaelite or a John Holmesite? Does he love to be in a minority? Has he taken opium and does he mean like a Malay to “run a muck”? None of these except that he will “run a muck” not drunk with opium or wine, against the aforesaid Leviathan Mammoth Legion who is now doing what the Bank of England and the E. India Company are doing, buying votes and seats.

For three days except a broiled rasher of Virginia bacon for br'kfast with my coffee and Virginian bread I have taken only a crust of bread and glass of wine, in lieu of dinner. It has enabled me to support myself; under unparalleled exertion. I mean such as I never before made. Poor Clay is quite low and indisposed: Since 3 this morning, it is now ten and these are the last lines I write by the *Concord*, I have been driving the pen. There is an impalpable dust here which with the heat and glare from the streets and white Houses is fatal to the eyes.

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Farewell! most faithfully your steadfast friend

[P. S.] It is sunday. Last half sheet of letter paper but the envelope left. Just heard but know not what to believe that the Duke of Orleans is proclaimed King. Yesterday La Fayette was at the head of affairs, a bad augury of success. He might make a capital chairman of the W. and M.⁵ or Chancellor of Exchequer for he is a first rate financier in one respect. No one better knows how to raise the supplies, than M. de LaF.

5 Ways and Means. "He would never forget to take money out of the Treasury. The appropriation bills at least would not." Note by Randolph.